

REMARKS

The present application was filed on August 4, 1999 with claims 1-26. Claims 1, 11, 21 and 24 are the independent claims.

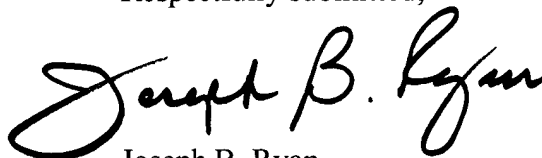
In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that dependent claims 9, 10, 19 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In this response, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 8 and 9, which are now canceled. Similarly, Applicants have amended independent claim 11 to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 19 and 20, which are now canceled.

With regard to claims 21-26, Applicants have amended independent claims 21 and 24 to include limitations similar to those of dependent claims 9 and 20, respectively. Accordingly, these claims are also believed to be allowable.

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 1-7, 10-18 and 21-26 as amended are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: March 28, 2005

Joseph B. Ryan
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 37,922
Ryan, Mason & Lewis, LLP
90 Forest Avenue
Locust Valley, NY 11560
(516) 759-7517